

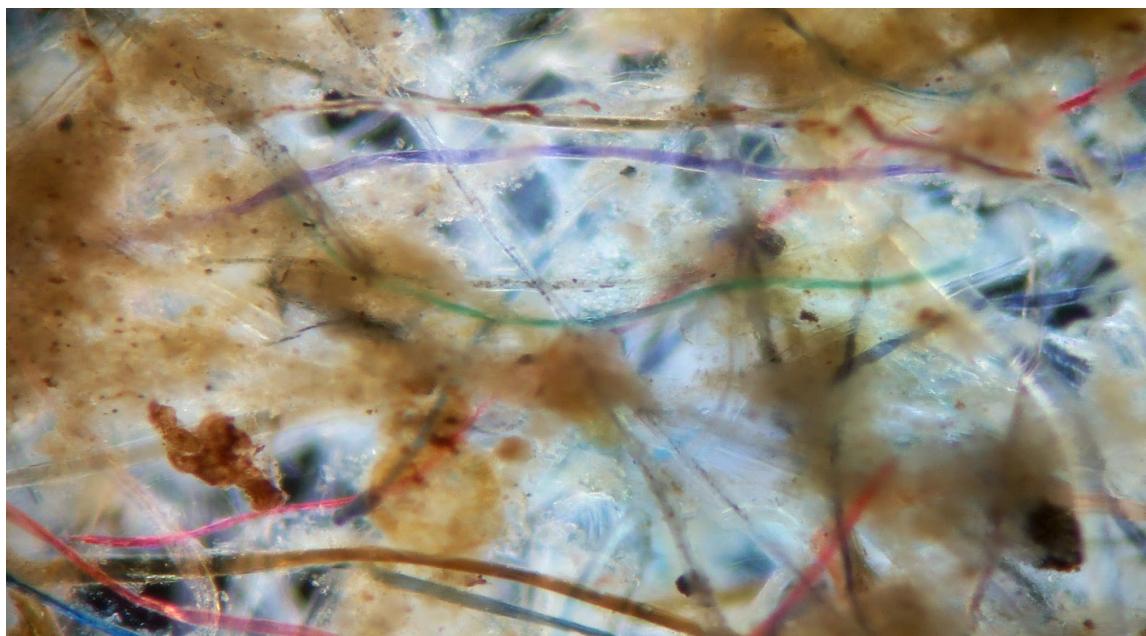
CLCJAWA Talking Points - Microfibers

Microfibers in Lake Michigan Water

Chicago Tribune Article: [A new pollution worry for Lake Michigan](#)

Published February 1st, 2015

1. CLCJAWA has no data to suggest microfibers are passing through the treatment process. To the contrary, the data suggest microfibers are being removed as easily as other particulate matter, like algae, of the same size. In recent analysis, 50 gallons of raw water and 50 gallons of finished water were passed through the same fine mesh net used by the scientists studying the microfibers in the Great Lakes. Four fibers were found in the raw water coming in from Lake Michigan, all just slightly larger than a grain of sand, and no fibers were found in the treated water leaving CLCJAWA.
2. CLCJAWA uses a three step process to remove particulate matter, including microfibers, from Lake Michigan water. In the first step, CLCJAWA uses a high quality coagulant to bind together dirt, particulate matter and bacteria. An image of microfibers enmeshed with particulate matter and bacteria in the resulting large “floc” particle is shown below. This picture was taken in our laboratories, under a microscope, in 2010.



3. In the second step, the large floc particle is allowed to settle out of the water and to the bottom of a “settling” tank where the accumulated particles are physically removed from the water. These removed solids are processed and disposed in a landfill.
4. In the third step, any particles that may have passed the settling step are removed in an advanced dual-media, deep-bed filtration step.
5. After passing through these three steps, the water produced by CLCJAWA filters is crystal clear, award winning water. CLCJAWA was only the third water plant in the U.S. to win the Excellence in Water Treatment Award by the Partnership for Safe Water in 2005 and has continued to receive the award since that time. CLCJAWA is also a repeat winner of the West Shore Water Taste Test.
6. Calibrated analytical instrumentation continually monitors particle levels at 21 different locations in the treatment process and samples are also tested daily in our laboratory to assure water quality.
7. The microfiber article was based on research completed by the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and the State University of New York at Fredonia, who sampled for a 3 day (in 2013) period collecting 19 samples in the Southern tip of Lake Michigan. This area is historically plagued with problems of debris and sand accumulation due to the currents and eddies that form in Lake Michigan. The sampling location may not be representative of Lake Michigan as a whole and given the short sampling time, is a snapshot in time of a complex water ecosystem.